



Heat illness among high school athletes--United States, 2005-2009

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Abstract:

INTRODUCTION: Heat illness is a leading cause of death and disability among U.S. high school athletes. **METHODS:** To examine the incidence and characteristics of heat illness among high school athletes, CDC analyzed data from the National High School Sports-Related Injury Surveillance Study for the period 2005-2009. **RESULTS:** During 2005-2009, the 100 schools sampled reported a total of 118 heat illnesses among high school athletes resulting in >/Euro Surveillance (Bulletin Europeen Sur Les Maladies Transmissibles; European Communicable Disease Bulletin) 1 day of time lost from athletic activity, a rate of 1.6 per 100,000 athlete-exposures, and an average of 29.5 time-loss heat illnesses per school year. The average corresponds to a weighted average annual estimate of 9,237 illnesses nationwide. The highest rate of time-loss heat illness was among football players, 4.5 per 100,000 athlete-exposures, a rate 10 times higher than the average rate (0.4) for the eight other sports. Time-loss heat illnesses occurred most frequently during August (66.3%) and while practicing or playing football (70.7%). No deaths were reported. **CONCLUSIONS:** Consistent with guidelines from the National Athletic Trainers' Association, to reduce the risk for heat illness, high school athletic programs should implement heat-acclimatization guidelines (e.g., set limits on summer practice duration and intensity). All athletes, coaches, athletic trainers, and parents/guardians should be aware of the risk factors for heat illness, follow recommended strategies, and be prepared to respond quickly to symptoms of illness. Coaches also should continue to stress to their athletes the importance of maintaining proper hydration before, during, and after sports activities. **IMPACT OF INDUSTRY:** By implementing preventive recommendations and quickly recognizing and responding to heat illness, coaches, athletic trainers, and the sporting community can prevent future deaths.

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Resource Description

Communication:

resource focus on research or methods on how to communicate or frame issues on climate change; surveys of attitudes, knowledge, beliefs about climate change

A focus of content

Other Communication Audience: Coaches

Exposure :

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

Temperature

Temperature: Extreme Heat

Geographic Feature: 

resource focuses on specific type of geography

None or Unspecified

Geographic Location: 

resource focuses on specific location

United States

Health Impact: 

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Injury

Intervention: 

strategy to prepare for or reduce the impact of climate change on health

A focus of content

Mitigation/Adaptation: 

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation

Population of Concern: A focus of content

Population of Concern: 

populations at particular risk or vulnerability to climate change impacts

Children, Workers

Resource Type: 

format or standard characteristic of resource

Research Article

Timescale: 

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified

Vulnerability/Impact Assessment: 

resource focus on process of identifying, quantifying, and prioritizing vulnerabilities in a system

A focus of content